

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (new): A spring-turning apparatus for turning a spring into a position suitable for delivery to a spring-transporting apparatus, wherein the spring-turning apparatus comprises:

a cassette wheel configured to be rotated about an axis, wherein the cassette wheel has at least one cassette compartment for holding the spring in a first rotational position; and
at least one first transfer element for delivering the spring to the spring-transporting apparatus in a second rotational position.

Claim 21 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the cassette wheel includes four cassette compartments, wherein the cassette wheel is configured to rotate and cause the at least one cassette compartment to move into the second rotational position having a 90° angle of rotation with respect to the first rotational position.

Claim 22 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 21, wherein each cassette compartment includes a first transfer element.

Claim 23 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the first transfer element includes a pivotally mounted sliding arm.

Claim 24 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the pivoting arm includes a recess for holding the spring.

Claim 25 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the at least one cassette compartment includes two opposite walls adapted to hold the spring therebetween.

Claim 26 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising rotary plates adapted to hold the spring therebetween.

Claim 27 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising a transfer unit, wherein the transfer unit includes two mutually opposite clamping plates for holding the spring by clamping thereof, and further including a second transfer element for delivering the spring from the transfer unit into the cassette wheel.

Claim 28 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 26, wherein one of the respective rotary plates is arranged in each one of the respective clamping plates.

Claim 29 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 27, wherein one of the respective rotary plates is arranged in each one of the respective clamping plates.

Claim 30 (new): The spring-turning apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the transfer unit is pivotally arranged.

Claim 31 (new): A method for forming rows of springs, the method comprising the steps of:

supplying the springs individually and delivering the springs at a lower delivery point to a spring conveyor; and

changing the relative position of the lower delivery point with respect to the spring conveyor.

Claim 32 (new): The method according to claim 31, further comprising the steps of:

delivering the springs individually to a transfer conveyor at an upper delivery point, wherein the upper delivery point remains constant in its relative position with respect to the spring conveyor;

conveying springs situated on the transfer conveyor to the lower delivery point;
and

delivering the springs at the lower delivery point to the spring conveyor.

Claim 33 (new): The method according to claim 31, wherein the spring conveyor is operated in one of a constant cycle and at a constant speed.

Claim 34 (new): A spring-transporting apparatus comprising a spring conveyor and a device for transferring springs to the spring conveyor, wherein the device is configured to transfer individually supplied springs in a lower delivery point to the spring conveyor in such a manner that the springs are arranged in a row and arranged one behind another and at selectable distances from one another on the spring conveyor, and wherein the relative position of the lower delivery point with respect to the spring conveyor is changeable.

Claim 35 (new): The apparatus according to claim 34, further comprising:
a transfer conveyor at least partially situated parallel and adjacent to the spring conveyor;

a first delivery means situated at an upper delivery point for delivering the springs to the transfer conveyor; and

a second delivery means for delivering the springs from the transfer conveyor to the spring conveyor, wherein the second delivery means are movable to the lower delivery position.

Claim 36 (new): The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the first delivery means delivers the springs at an upper delivery point that remains constant relative to the spring conveyor.

Claim 37 (new): The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the first and second delivery means deliver the springs individually.

Claim 38 (new): The apparatus according to claim 34, wherein the spring conveyor is operated by a servomotor.

Claim 39 (new): The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the transfer conveyor is operated by a servomotor.

Claim 40 (new): The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein one of the spring conveyor and the transfer conveyor includes two respective revolving belt conveyors situated parallel to each other and adapted to clamp the individual springs therebetween.